

**Norwalk Utility Advisory Commission – Regular Meeting
February 12, 2018 6:00 pm
Public Works Facility**

The regular meeting of the Utility Advisory Commission was called to order at 6:00 pm on Monday, February 12, 2018 by chair Newton Standridge. Members present at roll call: Newton Standridge, Ric Graves, Tim Kalvig, Dan Merriman, Aaron Uhl.

Staff present: Wayne Schwartz, Public Works Director; Joseph Ballard, Assistant Director Public Works; Shelley Stravers, Administrative Coordinator; Luke Nelson, City Manager; and Chelle Klootwyk, Utility Billing Supervisor.

Council Liaison Jaki Livingston was also present.

Agenda

*Motion by Merriman and seconded by Kalvig to approve Agenda as presented.
Approved 5-0.*

Minutes

A motion was made by Graves and seconded by Merriman to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2017 meeting as presented. Approved 5-0.

Storm Water Calculations and Charges – Luke Nelson

Nelson reported that several months ago the City conducted some internal audits for various utilities. During that audit they found that several customers were not being billed for full storm water fees as outlined in our Code. The initial intent was to implement these corrected rates in January, working through the details with the school first since they were the largest entity impacted. In moving through the process they learned that there was a “storm water detention exception” that allowed a 50% decrease in the storm water calculations. The school needed to review all of their facilities and determine which accounts had this detention exception. The School had their Engineer do these calculations.

Once finalized, the new fee for the school went from about \$900 per month to over \$2,000 per month. The financial impact of the school is significant and they requested that the rates be implemented in July, which would allow them to budget for the new expense in their next fiscal year. Staff also is requesting that whatever date is used for the school is also used for all other commercial accounts impacted by this situation.

Commission discussed that waiting until July 1 gave a few months for these customers to prepare their budgets for these changes. They also discussed how this differed from the previous conversation that was held where the Commission held customers accountable for the mistakes made on their water bills and we set a policy to be able

to be able to go back 12 months. Nelson explained that this was different in that those were based on consumption. This is storm water, and is not a metered consumption.

Motion by Graves and seconded by Kalvig to approve for recommendation new storm water calculation charges beginning July 1, 2018. Approved 5-0.

Update on Water Conservation Plan – Wayne Schwartz

Schwartz presented an update on the Water Conservation Plan. This is similar to the plan that we followed this past season when we had high water usage and we had to implement the Stage I and Stage II, but there were concerns that it wasn't in our ordinances and so it wasn't technically enforceable. Our City Attorney advised that get this put into an ordinance so we can enforce it. This is an information piece only tonight, but will be going to City Council on Thursday night.

Update on Regional Water Utility – Wayne Schwartz

The water entities in the Metro have been getting together to draft out a Memo of Understanding to have a regional water utility. Nelson said that drafts have been reviewed and changes have been forwarded to CIRDWC. The prior thought was that the treatment plant would stay with Des Moines Water Works, but now it looks more like the regional authority would own the assets instead. It will mirror what the WRA looks like. Schwartz will keep bringing forward updates on this. Graves asked if we will have to purchase assets. Schwartz stated we have already purchased capacity, but it is unclear at this point if we will have to purchase infrastructure. Schwartz noted that we will have a seat on a board, which is something that we do not have now, so that is a positive. This is something that will stay on the agenda and we will continue with updates.

Open forum

Schwartz noted that the first phase is out to bid right now for the new feeder to Norwalk. They have indicated that this will be in place before the peak season of calendar year 2019. This project is tying into the 8" line that is currently in place at Cumming. Nelson added that the City Council has put it into the CIP for several years down the road to add a 16" line parallel to that 8" line from Cumming.

McClure is wrapping up their Hydraulic Study. One of the things they found in their modeling is that years ago Des Moines Water Works had a line feeding Lakewood. If we would run another 12" line from booster station and tie it in behind LVA, we would not have had the issues that we had this last summer with the water shortage or the tower getting low. This is a relatively small project. The reasoning is that the booster station pumps water up to Colonial Circle and then turns around comes back down to the LVA. We get another 12" line there it removes a lot of the friction losses of going up

that hill and coming back down. So we would be looking at fast tracking a project here before spring. That would be alleviating a lot of stress to our system this year. This item has not gone to Council yet. We received three engineering proposals last week. If we did the whole thing it would be \$350,000-\$400,000. This should be on the March 1st City Council agenda. Nelson noted that sometimes we wonder why we have reserves, and this is a perfect example as to why. We are also looking at possibly getting the third pump installed at the pumping station. This will be a great insurance policy that we did not have last summer.

Foundation Drain District 5 will be starting with their public meetings in March.

Utility Advisory Commission decided to double irrigation rates. City Council and City Attorney said we can't double rates without justification of the costs. Once McClure finalizes their study we can look further into this topic.

Graves asked once McClure was done with their Study, if the UAC could have a Work Session to go over it, since it is a document that they will be using consistently.

Graves also asked where the new water tower was going to be located. Schwartz said this is also in the Hydraulic Study and they will be able to expand on that. Land acquisition is something that the City will be looking at in the future.

Standridge called the meeting to adjournment at 6:39 pm.

Next Regular Meeting April 9, 2018.

Newton Standridge, Chair

Shelley Stravers,
Administrative Coordinator